

# MENTAL WELLNESS

upper elementary lesson

Being mentally healthy does NOT mean feeling happy all of the time.



You are a human which means it's normal for you to have all sorts of feelings, sometimes even all sorts of feelings in the same day.

# notes to the counselor

This lesson was created to help upper elementary students understand the basics of mental health and wellness, including things that help vs. hurt our mental health, and signs they need to ask for help.

It does *not* explicitly teach about depression, anxiety, or other mental health disorders, nor is it about lessening mental health disorder stigmas.

The focus is providing students developmentally appropriate information to help them take good care of their own mental health.

Being mentally healthy means feeling happy or calm most of the time, being able to focus okay most of the time, and feeling good about yourself and your choices.



One of the things that can be really helpful for your mental health is to move your body.



This can look like playing a sport, dancing, or exercising. When we move our bodies, our brains release a chemical called endorphins

that can make us feel happier or calmer.

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**example slides - full  
slideshow is 27 slides)**

- Experts recommend kids your age get **9-11 hours of sleep** each night!

Need some tips for how to get more sleep?

- Only use your bed for sleep
- Go screen free for 30 minutes before bed
- Have some happy or hopeful things to think about after you lay down



Overdoing screen time hurts, too. It's not bad to watch shows or movies, or talk to your friends using a phone or tablet. The problem is when you're spending huge chunks of the day doing that, especially if you're not also doing fun things **WITHOUT** electronics.



How many hours a day do you guess you spend on your phone, tablet, computer, or TV?

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# trifold page for processing, reflecting, & planning

Here are the things I need to do **MORE** of to stay mentally healthy.

(Circle them, color them, or make a check by them.)

**Get My Feelings Out**

**Get Enough Sleep**

**Think Positive Thoughts**

**Set a Goal**

**Go Outside**

**Move My Body**

If you saw some signs that you needed help with your mental health, who would you ask for help?

What if you were worried about your friend's mental health? Who could you talk to?

What would you tell a friend if they said that people with mental health problems were "crazy"?

## Mental Health & Wellness

What is "mental health"? Write your definition here:

Everyone has **stressors** in their lives. What **stressors** are on your plate?

Our **thoughts** are incredibly powerful. Here are some of my **helpful** thoughts:

**SLEEP** helps our physical and mental health. Here are some things I can do differently to get **more** and/or **better** sleep:

And here are some **unhelpful** things I tell myself sometimes:

# interactive slides to use digitally



Speaking of stress...What are some stressors you have? Sometimes we use an expression about "what you have on your plate". What's on your plate? What are some of the things in your life that make you feel upset or that you're always worried about?

- BROTHERS OR SISTERS
- SCHOOL WORK
- FRIENDSHIP PROBLEMS
- HOME STUFF
- MISSING SOMEONE
- FAMILY MONEY ISSUES

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Think about a regular week for you. How often do you do each of these things?

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

	0	1-2	3-4	5-7
Spend Time Outside				
Go to Bed After 10pm				
Think Positive Thoughts				
Move Your Body/Exercise				
Spend 4+ Hours on the Phone, TV, Tablet, etc.				



Hi, I'm Sara! I create resources for elementary students, counselors, and teachers that improve social emotional learning and help students be their best selves. My focus is creating resources that are *effective* (using research-based best practices) and *engaging* (through collaborative learning and relevant scenarios) for all types of learners and populations.



## Education

B.A. from Michigan State University  
Psychology and Anthropology

M.S. from Vanderbilt University  
Community, Research, and Action

M.Ed. From Vanderbilt University  
Human Development Counseling:  
School Counseling & Mental Health

## Experience

I'm a former school counselor from a large southeastern school district with a wonderfully diverse group of students. I created and implemented a data-based comprehensive school counseling program while helping classroom teachers and administrators implement schoolwide SEL and restorative practices. Now, I share my ideas and resources to reach students and help educators across the world!

Let's  
Connect:

